Now IN SYRIA and IN LEBANON



Now IN SYRIA and IN LEBANON

Syria and Lebanon are two of the newest nations in the world. Both are members of the United Nations and of the Arab League. Once a part of the Turkish empire, Syria, which then included Lebanon, was placed under the Mandate of France at the end of World War I. After World War II this Mandate was withdrawn and the land divided into two independent states, Syria and Lebanon. Arabic is the prevailing language, with minor dialectic variations, but there are numerous foreign elements, including Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Iranians and Jews.

Both countries are essentially agricultural, most of the population of approximately 3,900,000 being engaged in the cultivation of the soil and in sheep and cattle raising. There is comparatively little mineral wealth in either Syria or Lebanon, but drilling for oil is now under way. The industries of both countries are on a small scale, though progress has been made in recent years. Lebanon has the advantage of two large ports on the Mediterranean, Beirut and Tripoli, but Latakia and Tartous in Syria can be described only as large fishing ports. There are very few miles of railways. Internal transportation is almost entirely by motor truck, bus and taxi, but there is air communication with all the world.

During the war the rate of employment was high, and wages were good, but when the occupying armies were withdrawn employment sharply decreased, while prices remained high. The development of rich oil deposits in the Near East, the building of pipelines with terminals and refineries at Tripoli, and the plan to run another pipeline to Sidon, have further complicated the economic situation. A serious economic consequence of the war is the fact that some 750,000 Palestinians are now refugees in the Arab states surrounding Palestine. These unsettled people are living in conditions which not only menace their own health and morale but also threaten the security of the regions in which they live. For this problem, which presents special difficulties in Lebanon, Palestine's nearest neighbor, there seems no immediate solution.

"—and preach the gospel to every creature."

When the Christian churches in the West turned their attention to this part of the world early in the 19th century they found Moslem power firmly established. Christianity, which had been known in these lands from its earliest days, was represented by many churches —Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Gregorian Armenian, Nestorian

Cover photo—Tripoli from Old Crusader's Fort Built Centuries Ago by Raymond of St. Giles.



A PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP JUST OUTSIDE THE FENCE OF GERARD INSTITUTE, SIDON.

and several sects affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, of which the Maronites are the strongest.

Opposition by the Turkish Government, religious antagonism, suspicion, and open hostility on the part of the people, language barriers and lack of communications and transportation, all served as obstacles to evangelical Christianity, but since Pliny Fish and Levi Parsons first arrived in 1818 there have been Protestant missionaries in Syria. Progress has been slow and Syria is still predominantly Moslem, though Lebanon has a slight Christian majority. Protestants, who have contributed much to the life and culture of the country, are a small minority of the population.

The Arab Evangelical Church, which is the result of Presbyterian work, has a membership of between 3000 and 3500, most of whom have come from the Greek Orthodox Church. There are local congregations in about 35 towns and villages and a large and influential church of approximately 1000 members in Beirut. One of the evangelistic activities of the Mission was the fostering of these evangelical churches during the years when they slowly developed a sense of independence and self-government. How well they have succeeded is revealed in the fact that in recent years the synod has carried on its own work and administered its funds, with the missionary giving advice only when asked.

The evangelistic work of the Mission is done in co-operation with the Church. At present the work in Syria is carried on in two centers. In Aleppo evangelistic work among students is stressed, and a library and reading-room afford many opportunities for spreading the Christian message. In Deir-ez-Zor the missionaries work in connection with the hospital, in the small Christian community, and among the Moslems. Concerning this latter work the Rev. Albert G. Edwards notes that "the urgent need for work among Moslems is recognized, but there are two grave problems,—first, how best to go about it in view of the delicate and touchy political situation, and second, what can be done for, with, and by the convert from Islam, who on accepting Christianity becomes in all probability a social outcast, certain of having the utmost difficulty in finding employment, and very likely in danger of losing his life."

The experimental farm at Deir-ez-Zor is an interesting part of the Mission's evangelistic program. A poultry project started with baby chicks flown from the United States, distribution of improved varieties of seed, and instruction and demonstration in modern agricultural methods, have done much to win the confidence and friendship of the people.



THE CONGREGATION LEAVING THE BEIRUT CHURCH AFTER THE SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE.

The head teacher at the government agricultural school, a frequent visitor at the farm, said recently: "This is the only place where anything new and different is being tried. When the villagers object to something new as unworkable—and they always do—I can reply that it has already been tried at the American Mission Farm."

This project offers an excellent opportunity for evangelistic work among the families on the farm, and Mr. Nelson gives as his first and most important aim "to instil the spark of new life in the individual members of each family."

In Lebanon the Jibrail Rural Fellowship Center is one of the Mission's strongest pieces of evangelistic work. A school is maintained for teen age girls who have had no previous education. After a few weeks of intensive instruction they are able to read, and go on to essential practical and scholastic subjects. During the third year the students live in the school and receive training in the skills necessary for a well-rounded Christian life in the village environment. A corresponding school for boys is also being started.

A second basic activity of the Center is leadership training. Toward this end, work camps have been carried on in co-operation with the Beirut College for Women. A few men from the Near East School of Theology and the American University are selected to help in the project.

An extension service which includes the distribution of improved seed and demonstration of the control of plant diseases and pests is also a part of the program of the Center.

Other evangelistic efforts include a pioneer station in the mountain village of Hermil, work among evangelical Christians remote from Protestant churches, and an active program of student evangelism, especially in the institutions in Tripoli and Beirut.



Now

IN SYRI
and
IN L

ON THE EXPERIMENTAL FARM AT DEIR-EZ-ZOR ARABS LEARN TO USE MODERN MACHINERY.

"—and he healed them all"

The medical work of the mission is carried on in three centers: the Hamlin Memorial Sanatorium for Tubercular Patients in the Lebanon Mountains near Beirut, Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Tripoli, and the Mission Hospital in Deir-ez-Zor.

Dr. Mary Eddy, an early missionary and the first woman to be given a license to practice medicine in the Turkish empire, was deeply concerned over the problem of tuberculosis, which was widespread and considered incurable. Through her efforts and gifts of the women of the Church of the Covenant in Washington, D. C., a sanatorium for tubercular patients was opened in 1908, and named for Dr. Teunis Hamlin, pastor of the church. Development has been steady through the years and today the hospital, which is under the direction of an able Lebanese physician, provides care for more than 200 patients, and is used as a teaching institute for students in the medical school of the American University in Beirut. It is an excellent example of what can be done under trained and devoted national leadership.

In Deir-ez-Zor, the Mission has had medical work since 1924, but the hospital was not opened until 1930. It serves not only the people of the town and surrounding villages but has given to many desert Arabs their first professional medical care. There is a nurses' training program in connection with the hospital and one of the most pressing needs at present is for a trained American nurse to act as supervisor, teacher and dietitian. Plans for the future include a mobile clinic for work in the villages combined with the evangelistic program. A station wagon for this purpose has already been purchased with special gifts from supporting churches in America.

Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Tripoli has over 100 beds and is equipped to give the best possible care to medical and surgical cases. There is a staff of capable doctors and

IA
d
.EBANON



AT KENNEDY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL EFFICIENT NURSING HELPS TO WIN THE BATTLE AGAINST DYSENTERY, MALARIA AND TYPHOID.

technicians under the leadership of Dr. Henry R. Boyes, and about sixty nurses. A four year nurses' training course, which is recognized by the government, has about forty students enrolled. As medical work in the country advances, the demand for these well-trained nurses increases, and today Kennedy graduates are found in hospitals and private practice all over the Near East.

Evangelistic emphasis is strong throughout the entire medical program. Services are held in the wards, Bibles are distributed to those willing to receive them, and patients are carefully followed up after they leave the hospital.

"—and he taught them"

When missionaries first arrived in Syria not a woman could read and write, and there was a high percentage of illiteracy among men. A beginning was made in 1834 when ten boys gathered in the home of a missionary for lessons, a beginning which has developed into the important educational work of the Mission that is today being carried on in four centers.

In Beirut there is the American School for Girls, giving courses from primary through high school, and the Beirut College for Women, which has just launched a four year program with a first senior class this year, after having been a junior College since 1924. More than 200 girls are enrolled, representing many nationalities and religious sects. They show a splendid spirit of service, and many of them work in summer camps and other projects where they can share their advantages with others who are less fortunate.

In Tripoli, the School for Boys and the School for Girls each offers a complete course through high school. Their joint enrollment is nearly a thousand. In Sidon, Gerard Institute for Boys and the School for Girls occupy adjoining sites and co-operate in social



IN A SIDON GIRLS' SCHOOL ECONOMICS CLASS TWO GIRLS COOK A ROAST ON KEROSENE PUFFERS SUCH AS ARE USED IN LEBANESE HOMES.

and training activities. In the girls' school the cottage system, giving students intimate contact with teachers and practical training, is in use.

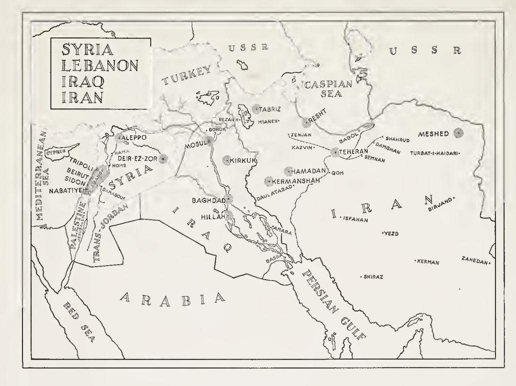
The Girls' School in Nabatiyeh will soon occupy their excellent new building. School work for boys is in the plans for the immediate future.

The Mission also co-operates in the American High School for Girls in Aleppo, in Aleppo College, and in the Near East School of Theology in Beirut.

The schools of the Mission are notable for the close relationship between missionaries and pupils, for the fact that most of the national teachers are Christian, and for their spiritual influence. They are an important factor in the life of the Near East and their influence is growing.

The Mission Press in Beirut, the great pioneer in furnishing Christian literature in Arabic, prints Bibles, hymnals, commentaries, religious books and tracts, and school books. The new Bookmobile, or traveling library, which the Mission uses in connection with the Bible Society, is helping in the urgent problem of distribution. *Neshra,* the monthly Christian magazine in Arabic, is filling a large need, and making a real contribution to the moral and religious thinking of its readers.

Nationalism, the general political situation and the problem of the refugees, have complicated the work of the Mission in Syria and in Lebanon, but have not prevented its continuance and development. Schools and hospitals are feeling the urgent need for larger and better accommodations to meet the demands made upon them, and where evangelists were once stoned out of town, colporteurs now sell religious books. The friendliness and devotion of the missionaries and the consecration of national leaders are bringing new spiritual life to these ancient lands.



MISSIONARY STAFF

Rev. and Mrs. S. Neale Alter
Mr. and Mrs. Clifton E. Anderson
Miss M. Claire Bailey
Dr. and Mrs. A. M. Bertsch, Jr.
Dr. and Mrs. Henry R. Boyes
Rev. and Mrs. R. C. Byerly
Miss Helen H. Cassile
Rev. and Mrs. D. H. Decherd
Rev. and Mrs. H. G. Dorman, Jr.
Rev. and Mrs. A. G. Edwards
Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Freidinger
Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Glockler
Rev. and Mrs. W. G. Greenslade
Mr. Douglas M. Hill
Mrs. Arthur J. Jacot
Miss Esther E. Johnson
Rev. and Mrs. Carl L. Nelson
Miss Rhoda Orme
Rev. and Mrs. George H. Scherer
Dr. and Mrs. W. C. Shoemaker
Miss R. Lois Stanton
Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Stoltzfus
Rev. and Mrs. Cullen I. K. Story
Miss Irene Teagarden
Rev. and Mrs. Paul D. Votaw
Mr. and Mrs. F. L. White
Rev. and Mrs. James W. Willoughby
Miss Lois Wilson
Miss Faith L. Winger

Short Term Workers

Miss Roseta M. Adams
Miss Henricka B. Beach
Miss M. Jean Dorsett
Mr. J. Edward Gates
Mr. Edwin B. Hanna
Miss Isabella B. Huston
Miss Lovina A. Kelley
Miss Ercell E. Leipholz
Miss Mary H. Scanlon
Mr. Thomas C. Weaver
Miss Kathleen L. Zehr

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS—Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
Foreign Missions and Overseas Interchurch Service
156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

1950 Printed in U.S.A.